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NCDOT Rail Division

The Rail Report



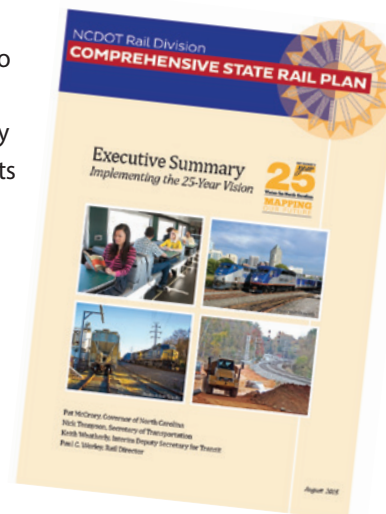
September 2015

North Carolina Comprehensive State Rail Plan Adopted

The North Carolina Comprehensive State Rail Plan was approved and adopted at the Board of Transportation Multi-modal Committee Meeting held on August 5, 2015. In order to be eligible for federal funds, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA) mandates that States develop and submit a State-approved State Rail Plan to the Secretary of Transportation of the United States Department of Transportation. The preparation of State rail plans has been a best practice for prioritizing publicly-funded freight improvements since the 1970's. The plan was prepared in accordance with Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) State Rail Plan Guidelines published in September 2013. It has been submitted to FRA to ensure that it meets those guidelines. In accordance with the FRA guidance, funding sources and benefit-cost ratios are provided for near-term projects (the next 5 years), and potential funding sources and a qualitative description of benefits are provided for longer term projects. The plan identifies freight, passenger, and safety needs on the Class I and short line systems that will help deliver Governor McCrory's 25 Year Vision for North Carolina. Representative freight projects include the development and / or enhancement of intermodal facilities and service improvements, improvement of port

access, corridor improvements to enhance the freight intermodal network, and preservation of key strategic corridors. These projects enhance the State's economy by linking our industries to the national rail network. The plan also identifies projects that will enhance rail capacity and safety along key corridors to better accommodate growing freight volumes and increased passenger service frequencies.

Near-term initiatives such as the implementation of the 4th and 5th Piedmont frequencies, Amtrak Thruway Bus Service, and new and improved stations will help continue to build and accommodate increasing ridership, while ensuring the corridors provide efficient freight access throughout our State. The North Carolina Comprehensive State Rail Plan Executive Summary, full report and appendices are available at the [Rail Resource Connect site](#).



NC Operation Lifesaver Whistle-Stop Safety Train

BeRailSafe, the NCDOT's train safety initiative, joined nonprofit advocacy group North Carolina Operation Lifesaver (NCOL) on its Whistle-Stop Safety Train tour in late July. It was a part of a collaborative effort to promote safety on and around the tracks in North Carolina. Norfolk Southern sponsored the tour, which ran on the 28th through the 30th of the month.

"There is a continuous need to learn about rail safety, particularly as it involves pedestrians," said Rail Planning Manager Neil Perry. Perry was among the NCDOT group that participated in the event where motorist and pedestrian safety were addressed.

Perry also said he and others were moved by featured NCOL train ride speaker Mark Kalina's testimony to educate the public about rail safety. Kalina was a pedestrian taking a shortcut on the campus of Ohio State University when he stumbled beside the tracks, caught himself on the train and was dragged under. He lost his legs as a result.

The NCOL train also used monitors to show riders what engineers see as they maneuver along the tracks.

NCOL's safety tour stopped in seven cities across North Carolina and South Carolina.

Right: Mark Kalina speaks to Safety Train participants

Below: Stop in downtown Hickory, NC



Regional Planning Study

On July 23, NCDOT Rail Director Paul Worley attended a meeting in Washington, DC with USDOT Secretary Anthony Foxx and other southeastern states to discuss the development of rail in the Southeast. In response to a Statement of Interest submitted to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) by NCDOT, USDOT Secretary Anthony Foxx announced that a federally-led regional study will be conducted to develop a shared, workable vision for a Southeast passenger and freight rail network. In his blog, Secretary Foxx noted that:

"A world-class passenger rail network in our fastest-growing regions is no luxury; it's a necessity.

[The US Department of Transportation] will undertake a planning effort to create a shared, workable vision for a Southeast passenger rail network that connects Washington, DC to Richmond, to Charlotte, to Raleigh, and to Atlanta. These are cities that – like their Northeast Corridor counterparts – are business and population centers between which people need a travel option beyond crowded highways and airplanes."

The planning process will help establish a common, long-term vision for intrastate and regional high-performance freight and passenger rail services based upon existing conditions, projections of future travel demand, and the optimal role for the rail network with multi-modal connections.

The Statement of Interest was submitted by the N.C. Department of Transportation on behalf of the District of Columbia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. The study will build upon work already completed by these partners as well as the Virginia-North Carolina Interstate Rail Compact.

The study will be led by FRA and its consultant team with input from multiple stakeholders including state departments of transportation, state and regional economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, Class I, regional, and short line railroad operators, regional and select local planning organizations, select regional and local transit operators, and rail advocacy groups. The Rail Division is currently working with the Triangle Chapter of the Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) to plan a regional conference for early 2016 to help kick-off this study.

For more information about the regional study, please contact Eddie McFalls, PE at (919) 707-4727 or ebmcfalls@ncdot.gov. If you are interested in helping plan the regional conference, contact Sandy Nance at (919) 280-4054 or snance@ncdot.gov.

Iowa Pacific Holdings assumes operations and maintenance of NCDOT's Piedmont & Northern Corridor



Crew for first P&N / IPH run, Bill Bartosh & Chris Lainis, Ranlo, NC, Aug. 1, 2015

NCDOT Rail Division selected Iowa Pacific Holdings to operate and maintain the Piedmont & Northern (P&N) corridor from Gastonia to Belmont. A lease and operating agreement was signed on May 13, 2015. The selection was the result of an open procurement process with input from Gaston County and others. This 13-mile corridor has many great opportunities for future industrial development.

Iowa Pacific is working with Gaston County Economic Development Commission to attract new industrial customers along the P&N rail line. Iowa Pacific began operations on August 1st. They have opened an office in Gastonia for local operations and marketing. Inquiries may currently be directed to Bill Bartosh, General Manager of Piedmont Railway, at 704-578-1651.

NCDOT Rail Division Staff Participate in Federal Railroad Administration Right-of-Way & Trespass Prevention Workshop

The Federal Railroad Administration sponsored workshop, held August 4-6, 2015 in Charlotte, North Carolina, identified and shared existing industry best practices and explored new trespass abatement and mitigation strategies that the rail industry can adopt to reduce the number of right-of-way and trespasser incidents and fatalities.

NCDOT Rail staff members participated in the conference, with Rail Director Paul Worley giving the welcoming address. Engineering Coordination & Safety Branch Manager, Jahmal Pullen, moderated a Design, Technology and Infrastructure Session. Rail Signals Manager Richard Mullinax shared information about the recent work and evaluation of Dynamic Gate Operations with Vehicle Detection at 4-Quadrant Gated Highway-Rail Crossing used to control and regulate railroad crossing gate arms and trespasser behavior studies underway with the Institute for Transportation Research and Education.



Worley gives welcoming address to the FRA 2015 Right of Way Fatality and Trespass Prevention Workshop



Jahmal Pullen, right, moderates workshop

Fun Fall Events Plentiful along North Carolina's Amtrak Route



Traveling to events and festivals can be simple and stress free this fall, thanks to North Carolina's Amtrak. Many events are within walking distance of the stations, and in some cases you get off the train right in the center of the activities. Transit connections and taxi services are also available at the stations.

1. **National Folk Festival**, September 11-13 in downtown Greensboro. Festival events are a few blocks from the Douglas Gaylon Amtrak Station.



2. **Day out with Thomas**, September 25-27 and October 2-4 at the NC Transportation Museum. Ride the train to Salisbury, and catch the NCTM Trolley to the museum.

3. **Wide Open Bluegrass**, October 2-3 in downtown Raleigh, features the best in bluegrass from across the United States. This festival offers ticketed events at Red Hat Amphitheater and a free Streetfest with live music on 5 stages, dance, food and activities, as well as the Whole Hog Barbecue State Championship.



4. **Selma Railroad Days Festival**, October 3 in downtown, features live entertainment, food vendors, arts and crafts vendors, rides, special events, carnival, Selma Railroad Run, Caboose Run, parade, pageant, and much more!



5. **N.C. State Fair**, October 15-25, 2015, where "Nothing Could Be Finer!" than getting off the Carolinian across the street from Gate 1 and spending the day sampling food, rides and exhibits. Be sure to visit NCDOT's BeRailSafe booth located in Safety City at the NC State Fair

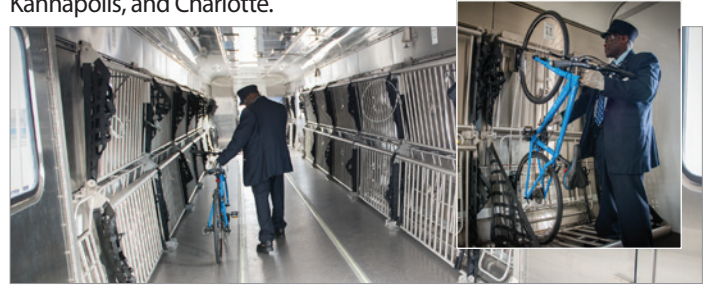
for giveaways and to learn more about Rail Safety. Use station code NSF for this special stop at the fairgrounds which begins October 16.

6. **The 32nd Annual Lexington Barbecue Festival**, Saturday October 24. North Carolina's Amtrak makes special stops that day in downtown in the center of the action. Use station code LEX when booking your ticket.



New Checked Bike Service Offered on Carolinian

North Carolina's Amtrak now offers walk-up checked bicycle service aboard Carolinian trains 79 and 80 at the following stations: Raleigh, Cary, Durham, Burlington, Greensboro, High Point, Salisbury, Kannapolis, and Charlotte.



Walk-up bicycles are free of charge, but reservations are required for the six spaces. Passenger must have a ticket for the bicycle and a baggage tag. Baggage tags can be obtained at the Amtrak ticket office. Passengers boarding at NCDOT staffed stations can obtain a bike tag from the station staff.

Only standard size bikes are permitted. Large seat/saddle bags must be removed from the bike. These items can be checked or carried on the train. They will be counted as a checked or carry-on item.

Passenger checking bicycles must arrive 30 minutes prior to train departure to allow sufficient time to obtain a ticket and baggage tag, and get the bike to the baggage car.

Walk-up checked bike service has been available on Piedmont trains since 1998.

For more information on bringing bikes on board both the Carolinian and Piedmont trains, visit www.ncbytrain.org.



Through advertising partnerships, baseball fans across the state learned more about the passenger train services offered by North Carolina's Amtrak. Tables, information and opportunities to win train tickets and other items were set up at Burlington Royals, Carolina Mudcats, Charlotte Knights, Durham Bulls, Greensboro Grasshoppers, Kannapolis Intimidators, Thomasville Hi-Toms and Wilson Tobs games this summer.

Ridership & Revenue on NC's Amtrak Service – *June 2015 vs. 2014

	RIDERSHIP			REVENUE		
	2015	2014	% +/-	2015	2014	% +/-
Piedmont	11,033	13,188	-16%	\$223,053	\$262,194	-15%
Carolinian	23,775	27,973	-15%	\$1,589,602	\$1,900,403	-16%

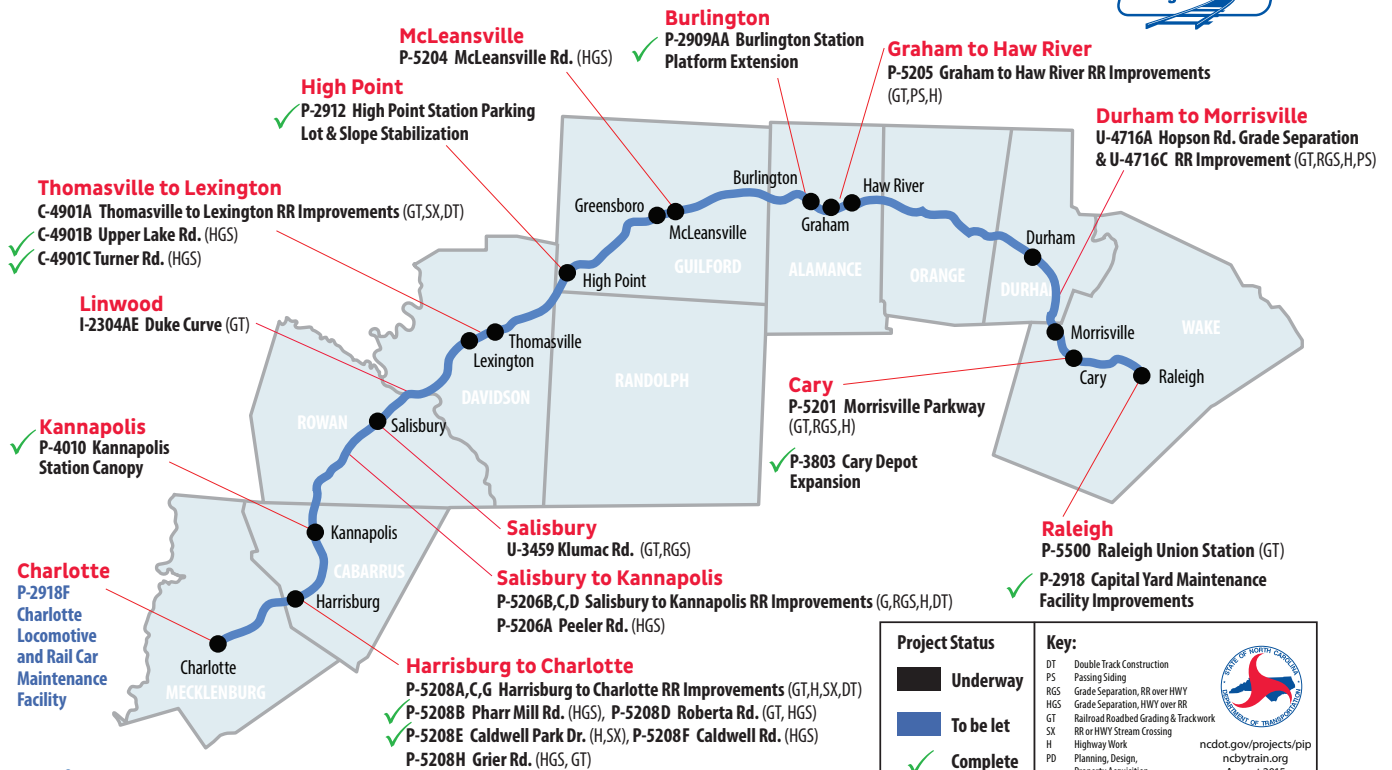
*June 2015 service modifications and annulments impacted 14 trains due to PIP construction as compared to only two Piedmont annulments in June 2014. June 2015 trains impacted: six Carolinian trains ran on modified operations: 79 and 80 only operated between NYP-RGH (6/8), 79 and 80 only operated between RGH-CLT (6/20 and 6/21); four Piedmont trains were annulled and four ran on modified operations: 73, 74, 75, and 76 operated train and bus combinations (6/1); 74 and 75 were annulled (6/8 and 6/15). Looking ahead: Four to five service disruptions impacting midday trains are expected between September and December 2015. Additional analysis finds high correlation between lower retail gas prices and drops in Piedmont ridership.

1,118



Hours Volunteered by N.C. Train Hosts in July, supporting North Carolina's Amtrak onboard trains and at events.

Piedmont Improvement Program – August 2015 Status Report



Project Schedule



Spent to Date of \$520M (eff. 7/31/2015)

Component	Expenditure
PD&A/ROW	\$47,102,135
Equipment Procurement & Rebuild	\$26,933,811
Stations & Facilities	\$14,280,736
Track & Structures	\$ 188,902,604
CRISP	\$2,180,376
Program Totals	\$279,399,662

Six new contracts totaling \$5,195,463 were awarded in July.

Commitments to Date of \$520M (eff. 7/31/2015)

Current Commitments		\$447M
Pending Commitments	Anticipated Date	\$66.7M
Charlotte Maintenance Facility ROW	9/15	\$29M
Charlotte Maintenance Facility Construction	3/16	\$28M
PIDS Construction	1/16	\$1.5M
PD&A	Through '16	\$8.2M
Balance		\$6.3M

PIP and Congestion Mitigation Milestones

Enfield - The Enfield double crossover was put into service on August 9, allowing trains to access both tracks in both directions, improving the efficiency and use of the existing double track segment.

Harrisburg - Pharr Mill Road overpass opened to traffic on July 31. The new bridge provides improved traffic flow by grade separated access across both the NCRR railroad corridor and NC 49. The existing grade crossing has been removed allowing for roadbed construction to progress in this area.

Harrisburg - On the Haydock to Junker project, the Rocky River railroad bridge steel girders have been set for the second span. The bridge is anticipated to be complete in November.

Graham - Track construction has begun on the Haw River passing siding project. Track for the double track realignment at the west end of the project is progressing in the Pomeroy St. crossing area.

Raleigh - Track and signal cut-ins have occurred on the Tryon Siding project. The project is anticipated to be complete by October.

Piedmont Improvement Program and Congestion Mitigation Project Photos July and August 2015



Congestion Mitigation Project in Enfield was completed and put into service on August 9, 2015.



P-5201 Morrisville Parkway, bridge construction



U-4716 Nelson to Clegg Passing Siding, track construction



P-5205 Graham to Haw River Passing Siding, track construction



C-4901 Bowers to Lake, track Construction



U-3459 Klumac Road, bridge construction

Piedmont Improvement Program Project Photos July and August 2015



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, Kimball Road grade separation



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, CP Sumner track material staging



P-5208A Haydock to Junker
Coddle Creek Bridge Foundation Work



P-5208 Haydock to Junker, Rocky River bridge construction



P-5500C Tryon Siding, track construction



P-5500C Tryon Siding, track construction